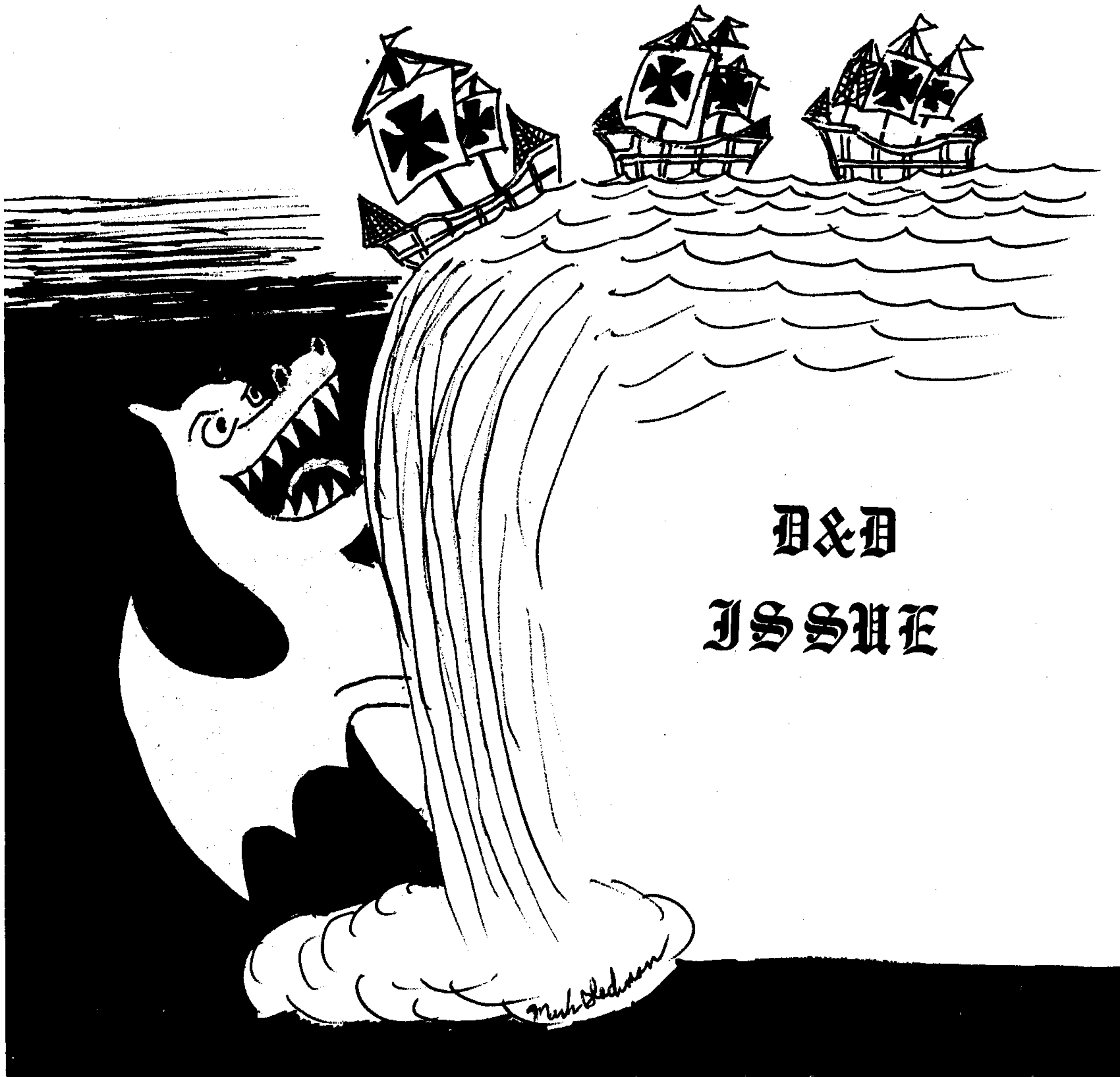
The Mixumaxu Gazette

no. 57 October 1976



D&D ISSUE

This special Dungeons& Dragons issue of *the Mixumaxu Gazette* is published, as are all the issues, by Robert Bryan Lipton, 556 Green Place, Woodmere, NY 11598, Telephone (516) 374-4723. Contributions are solicited. Authors of articles will receive $1.50 per page. Artists will get $2 for each illustration. Inquire for editorial preference. Post no bills

A MIXUMAXU GAZETTE QUANTITY PUBLICATION # 157

::

Well, it's not a bad issue I have sitting here, already on stencil. Assuming, that is, that Stu Shiffman has come through with his promised cover. If he hasn't you will just have read an incredible first page. That would ruin this issue. Terrible. I think I'll kill Stu.

Meanwhile, in the Hobby political scene, everyone is printing Walt Buchanan's history of the Hobby in twelve or fifteen zines. This article will join the many classics which were not printed here: Pulsipher's *Verhandeln*; Sacks' *Ablehnen*; Nick Ulanov's fictional account of an anonymous relative of an important Russian revolutionist, and his loss of virginity; and the varied and various maunderings of Adam Kasanof ("Just because he produces so much of it doesn't mean that there's something worthwhile in there," as has been said of Lin Carter)

Other important news is that I have discovered that I had not conspired with Lew Pulsipher and Len Lakofka to take over the Diplomacy hobby. If this hadn't been reported in a recent edition of *Paroxysm* I might have gone through life thinking I am a rotten person. Why, I still sometimes feel pangs of guilt when I think of the evils I might have perpetrated on the Hobby if the omniscient Rod Walker. Amazing how the Canadians know everything.

In any case, the matter of the new Constitution is going to be debated in full panalopy before the entire IDA. Tantah! Big deal. By the time the debate is finished there will be 23 members of the IDA. They will split the treasury and we will all join CDO. We can then demand an American representative so that the Americans will be represented (after all, we Americans have peculiar problems). The Canadians will insist no such representative is necessary and we can talk about Canadian imperialism. Didn't you read Harry Drew's comments on the necessity of a Canadian Armed Forces in *Paroxysm*? They're trying to take over!

All of this has nothing to do with gaming, does it? It's strange the way some people amuse themselves. Me, I'm the sort who likes to kill off 13th Level magic-users. Arnold Proujansky would go and try to mass charm 51 nixies. He he he he he...

Abyssinia,

Robert Bryan Lipton

SPELL TACTICS

by Lee Burwasser

Lee is a New Jersey fan who runs her Dungeon, Tyrkirsfyørd *whenever possible. She is best known in New York for originating the infamous series,* Streak Gordon.

Spells are fearsome weaponry, but like all weapons they must be properly used. There is a saying: "Dangerous as a first level with a fireball."

Várdis has an example of this in her store of Valuable Mistakes To Have Survived Making. Back when she was a first level... in fact, it was her second time in a dungeon...

"I was second-in-command while we were actually in combat and sort of in co-command the rest of the time. Our leader was a first-level fighter, as green as I was, but the kind who just naturally gives orders when orders have to be given. His name is Miles and he's officially Lawful -- so was I back then -- but I won't be in the least surprised if he's Neutral the next time I see him.

"There we were, a collection of first-time-out and second-time-out expeditioners, and there on the chief orc of the troop we'd just mopped up was a necklace of fireballs. A slave of their master told us, not what it was (she'd never heard the term) but what the orcs thought it would do.

"I tried to ask her -- Hmm? No mystery, it was Lucy Clemsdaughter, our cleric. Hell on a stick with that warhammer of hers, Borisbane.

"I tried to get some idea of how dangerous the thing might be -- all we knew was that it registered on a Detect Magic -- by asking her if she'd be willing to touch it. Well, untaught as she was, Lucy had all the guts you need in a fighting cleric. She said "Sure!" and picked it up. I can get a fine case of the shakes just thinking about what a piece of dungeon loot can do to people who touch it casually...

"Miles carried the fireball necklace. I shouldn't have let him. A fighter hasn't the training to appreciate the dangers of magic unless he's been around magic-users long enough to pick up the drill. Miles hadn't. And *I* hadn't been around high-level spells -- Fireball is third -- enough to know that I should have insisted on carrying it.

"We met up with a roomful of snakes. We slept all but one, and Miles *threw a fireball* at the last one! Into a ten-by-ten room. I don't know how we survived it. *Some*thing must have been wrong with it, because a fireball's blast radius is twenty feet and even the weakest does enough damage to kill any first level. Hell! To kill the thrower if she's not careful and the knucklebones fall that way. And it takes a Fifth Level Magic User to cast Fireball. This one only killed the snakes and shook us up. Bear-daughter thinks it was a dud. ((Translation: the DM is going to run fireballs differently from now on)) We can't hope for that kind of luck every time.

"We have a saying back home: 'Dangerous as a first level with...'"

Várdis doesn't mention it (because she has never encountered it personally) that lightning bolts also have backlash. Throw a lightning bolt into a 10x10 room and the thing will bounce around until it's gone the full 60 feet, probably zapping you along the way. It does the same damage as a fireball.

Even first level spells must be carefully used. Várdis has a tale on that too.

"This wasn't anyone's fault. It's just the sort of thing you have to be prepared for. I'm sure every magic-user has had it happen. or has been on an expedition where it has happened to someone else. Or both. For me it was both.

"The first time was on the expedition where we somehow survived misusing a fireball. The wolfhound, Cuchullain, was at the throat of ... an orc, I think... and I was trying to sleep the orc. I slept Cuchullain too. Released the spell on him right away, of course, and no harm done. But there he was, pretty vulnerable for a round.

"There was a second time on that expedition. I slept my teammate, Radu. And I *didn't* release the spell at once, because he'd been hit so bad, and sister Vera was having so much trouble healing him that he was better off unconscious.

"You simply have to understand and accept that these things will happen. I recall once... it was in Tyrkirsfjørd-under; I was second or third level by then. We were fighting a squadron of orkettes. (That's right. Young female orcs. They were the followers of an anti-cleric called The Manson for some reason we never learned.) Dyvim Rast, in the second or third rank, tried to throw Sleep past Dmitri, in the first rank and engaged with the front-rank orkettes; he didn't quite make it. Rleased Dmitri at once, just as I did Cuchullain in Rivergate One, and again there was no harm done. In fact, Dmitri only lost half a round. Still...

"(Don't spread the story around, will you? Mishka was, well, extremely extremely annoyed at Rast, and there's no need to set the whole thing going again. These things happen.)"

Spells that you cast on your own party are usually best administered before you go into action. This is an easily-neglected point in places ("Such as Carnelian," says Várdis) where the tactical use of spells is well-known and taken for granted. Strength, Haste, the Clerical spell Bless -- all should be cast on the party before battle.

"We were escorting Merlinden and her sword 'Eadcrusher (as he was called then) to the Smith on Level Three. I bought a Haste and a Slow spell from Bear-Daughter to get us through Boris' gargoyles (Yes, he's the Boris that Lucy's hammer was the bane of. One stroke: smash.) Bear-Daughter trained me in using the spells, but didn't think to tell me *when* to use them.

"We got the door open and there were the fourteen gargoyles. I threw Slow at them and then started forward to cast Haste on the party -- forgetting that Haste is an area spell and that you don't have to be facing everyone you intend to throw it on. I practically ran into our other cleric, Mehitabel (she was in tiger form) before I remembered and braked. I did a roll and fetched up against the wall. No damage to me, but a round lost for our party.

"By the time I was up and able to throw a Haste spell the gargoyles had closed with our front rank. The Haste spell hit the three that were engaged with Mehitabel, Radu and Isoruku, negating the Slow spell on them. In truth it was I who killed Isorku that day. The Smith was able to raise him, for which I thank his gods and hers, but even Raise Dead Fully does not erase memories. Nor should it. My ignorance cost us a life."

While Várdis is recovering her cool, a word on Strength. Since it lasts eight hours, Magic Users seldom carry it as an in-the-head spell if they have any means of storing it. Except on an overland espedition. Parties are so seldom underground for eight hours (at least not in Carnelian) that if you can get someone to escort your spell book back to whatever lock and key you keep it under, you just might throw it from the book rather than use up a space in your spell-storing devices.

"Another thing to remember about Haste," says Várdis, "is to release it after the combat. Otherwise you exhaust your party to no purpose. Throw it before you open the door and release it after you cut the last throat. It means you have to do without it for the first few rounds if you're surprised, but it also means that you don't wear yourself out scampering along the corridors."

Long-duration Detects are another kind of spell to cast on yourself beforehand. ESP, lasting two hours, is the best-known and most familiar of these. Vardis has a Valuable Mistake To Have Survived Making involving that one too.

"We were on what turned out to be a fool's errand. I was the fool. On our first attempt we never even got out of the transporter because I waited too long in casting ESP.

"There were nearly a dozen giant spiders sitting on the ceiling. A round after we transported in, they dropped on us. Now those things are very easy to kill -- provided you have a front. When they drop into the middle of your formation you are each of you surrounded. Even if there are none of you at the moment you have to be all kinds of careful trying to hit the ones clinging to your companions. There we were: A Fith, a Fourth and two Thirds -- and a dozen spiders laid us all out except Lucy. She got us out by feeding gold pieces into the transporter as soon as she got a minute free. By that time the rest of us were paralyzed.

"Where does ESP come in? Simply this: If I'd thrown a Sleep at those spiders while they were still on the ceiling, few if any would have been able to hit us. We wouldn't have had two or three of them on each member of the party. And why couldn't I throw Sleep? Because I'd just thrown ESP!

"Do all your long-duration spells before you set out and *wait to recover*. In Carnelian that means: throw Strength, ESP, Bless and the like on yourself or the party, wait to recover and *then* transport down. However you manage it, *don't* go into a dungeon with a spell just thrown. Someone might be waiting for you."

Even as basic a spell as Charm can be thrown around too casually. We've all been in that typical dungeon scene: one of the party disarms and prepares to pick up a piece of loot. The Magic-users stand by with Charm. The rest of the party guards the doors, back hairs a-prickle...

But Charm isn't the answer to everything. It is not the answer to a companion Charmed or Held or given Geas or Quest by a monster. Compulsion conflicts can be deadly. Ask Vardis.

"I was under Geas to collect fifteen heads for Almuron, a high-level Chaos Cleric. (I'll tell the tale of that another time if anyone really wants to hear it. All that matters is this: *NEVER* make trouble for Smithereen on First Level Rivergate. He's a wizard, at least.) The nearest place we knew had enough to satisfy him was the barracks of the Gnoll King's followers.

"The route we took passed by what we later decided must have been a harpy. I heard the song -- elf ears, you know -- and was immediately under compulsion to go to the singer. The geas gripped my mind like an eagle's talons; between them, the geas and the song were tearing my mind in two.

"My companions understood what was happening as soon as I spoke of the singer. Eikinskjaudi cried for Garin to stay clear -- dwarf ears -- while Lucy stunned me with a slingstone. She and Radu plugged their ears and dragged me away from the door without hearing the song -- human ears and weren't we grateful! -- before Lucy woke and healed me.

"That's as close as I ever want to come to compulsion conflict. There's a chance of going totally insane. *Don't* try to solve a hostile's Charm by putting your own on top of it. Dispel it if you've got Dispell, knock your companion unconscious, kill the hostile, you might even do as you're told; but don't risk two compulsions on one mind unless there's just no other way."

Every spell has its uses and misuses. Other Magic-Users have different collections of Valuable Mistakes To Have Survived Making. The trick is to learn from other people's mistakes before you make a fatal one of your own.

REALITY

This article, in slightly different form, appeared in THE SMOKY DRAGON # 6.

Most people, when designing their Dungeons & Dragons world, base them on such well-known works of fantasy as J.R.R.Tolkien's *Lord of the Ring* trilogy, or one of Michael Moorcock's hack Sword & Sorcery series. Others will use lesser-known works; a few will use the D&D rules as an outline and create their own worlds.

Problems usually arise from the dungeonmaster's lack of knowledge of his world. The dungeonmaster should be aware of the technological level of his world; of the various trade routes; of the world; of the various states and races. The dungeonmaster should know precisely what the various characters in his world know. The players should be presented with each fact as it becomes pertinent to his situation, brought from the memory of his character as supplied by the gamesmaster.

In essence, the dungeonmaster supplies the world and the characters; the players supply the psychologies of their characters and their reaction.

This statement may seem a little severe, but it has an honorable lineage in the history of fantasy. In his classic sf novel *A Mission of Gravity*, Hal Clement devised a world. Before he began to write more than the barebones synopsis of the plot before he had worked out the total scientific outline of the world. Clement was interested in the environment of his world, not the society. Therefore the novel is brilliance in the reality of the world.

J.R.R. Tolkien was a linguist. He spent years working out the languages, alphabets, and history of his Middle Earth. His trilogy ends with several hundred pages of appendices Because of this the history of his world came as alive as that of our world.

Ursula LeGuin spent months considering the rationale of magic and philosophy on the world of Earthsea. Therefore Earthsea comes alive.

Remember that no world is strange to its inhabitants. Frodo Baggins discovered great variety and danger after leaving the Shire, but to him it was the variety and danger an inhabitant of New York would discover in the Congo, not that danger and variety of Middle Earth. The world-picture Baggins gained in his travels did not destroy his original beliefs, but expanded them as Einstein expanded Newtonian reality.

This is why the dungeonmaster must know his world in gross and fine. Contradictions in reality must be avoided. If cravats are unknown in a world it is sheer idiocy to introduce the Magical Tie Clips which Greg Costikyan presented in *Fire the Arquebusiers! #1*. There is simply no reason for them to exist. Permitting high-level magic-users to transmute elements would soon throw the world into insanity. If lead can be changed to gold, or sand to platinum, of what value is anything?

Consider as a gross example what happened to an expedition in which I was a member at the Princeton Convention last spring.

We wandered into a room in a dungeon where seven hobbits were playing a game. The game was soon recognized as Diplomacy.

Consider what this means. Diplomacy is not a game which two people can play, as is chess, but a complex game that requires seven people. Its existence in the world implied a sizable leisure class, at the very least.

This does not bother most people. Fantasy worlds seem singularly lacking in lower classes. This is ridiculous, however, for if the world is so wealthy that there are no lower classes, why were we spending our time by risking our lives for probematical gain?

All of the expedition's members recognized Diplomacy. Either all the characters were wealthy enough to be familiar with the game (ridiculous!

why leave our safe and certain homes for uncertain deaths?) or the world itself was technologically (or magically) advanced enough to provide large chunks of leisure for all of its dwellers.

It is a general rule that when a society can produce a particular weapon, it will. Atom Bombs were manufactured before nuclear generating plants because while you can die in a war, you can't die from a shortage of something that never was. Military research, in other words, is generally in advance of civilian research. Never behind.

Therefore if this world is advanced enough to mass-produce Diplomacy (and the set was described as the type with which the reader of this zine is familiar), it is advanced enough to produce A-Bombs. Or the equivalent of A-Bombs. Therefore, what was this bunch of idiots doing trying to invade a dungeon with swords? Of what use is a sword against a machine-gun? The knowledge of my character was useless. I could not cope with this world. Therefore I was going to die.

The reader may think this reasoning false; that this merely showed there were more things in Heaven and in Earth than were dreamt of in my philosophy; that a New Guinea savage would be as confused in an atomic power plant. I agree. But does the reader think that a New Guinea savage in a power plant, looking to kill technicians and steal valuable-looking things would live long. That savage would steal a plutonium rod and die within the week.

If I were in that savage's place I would do my damnedest to get out and disturb as few people as possible.

All of this was because the dungeonmaster had not considered the ramifications of that Diplomacy set. He did not understand his world. He had said to himself "Hmm, I've got a bunch of Diplomacy players here, it'll tickle their senses of humor to find a set here."

For a party to meet strange monsters is fine. No one knows everything about this world, and if I met a blue bear I would be cautiously curious. But if I were told by the dungeonmaster, after inspecting it for half an hour that the blue bear claimed to be my sister Guenivere, and could prove it, and that I hadn't recognized her despite the fact that she had always been a blue bear... It is grossly unfair to the player.

If that had happened in a novel I would have properly have screamed that the idea was insane and would have put down the book immediately. Yet a friend stated such an occurence had happened in a dungeon and had been surprised when I said I would never play in such a campaign.

The only way to avoid such things is for the dungeonmaster to know everything in his world, and to let you know what your character knows. If the dungeonmaster had told the player, on sighting the blue bear, that his great-aunt Henrietta had turned into such a thing, and she was such a nice woman, always with a cookie for the children, then I could accept it. But a person with no knowledge of the world he has lived in for some 20 years is less easy to accept than balrogs in the closet.

Worse, it makes for a bad game.

::

Toka The Town

1: This issue's cover is not by Stu Shiffman, but by Mark Blackman, a friend from the Terrestrial Amateur Press Society. This brings to five the number of cover artists herein... a large number for a Diplomacy zine. I can, however, always use more artwork. Line drawings are preferable, and are best done with a Flair or a black ball-point pen. Check with me for ideas.

SYMPOSIUM

For the past year and a half Tactical Studies Rules' Dungeons & Dragons *has been steadily increasing in popularity. There are now two amateur press associations devoted to it (*Alarums & Excursions *in Calfiornia and* The Wild Hunt *in New England) There are at least three magazines on the subject in North America. (*Box of Many Things, The Dungeoneer *and* The Haven Herald*) and one in Great Britain (*News from Bree*) There are few amateur wargaming magazines in North America which have not devoted at least a couple of pages to this game.*

Why is Dungeons & Dragons *so popular? And, since it is an open-ended game, subject to constant improvement, the important question arises: what is wrong with it?*

Finally, because its popularity indicates so, what is right with it? What should remain the same?

When I began plans for this issue I determined to organize a symposium on this subject. Knowing how unreliable hobbyists are, I asked over a dizen to contribute. The authors who have contributed here are fewer than a dozen, but they each answer the question in a different way.

Somewhere in these essays, the correct answer may be found. Or it may be in all of them, because there is no reason to believe that so inventive a game as Dungeons & Dragons *is limited in its appeal. Many types like it.*

LEN LAKOFKA

Len has been producing his Diplomacy magazine, Liasons Dangereuses *for over seven years. Readers of LD will note frequent rules additions for D&D in the past year.*

Why is *Dungeons & Dragons* popular? That's easy -- it's *fun*. Most wargames are intellectual pursuits, nothing more nor less. While it is 'fun' to win wargames it is one hell of a lot of work: page after page of rules; complex counting of hexagons; watching for terrain restrictions; adding up ungodly columns of figures to determine it's a 1:1 attack anyway; et cetera! This is a lot of work, and work is not that much fun. In D&D the Dungeonmaster (who should have a well-defined sado-masochistic streak in him/her) can create all kinds of traps, ploys gimmicks, monsters and labyrinths ad infinitum. It is a game-designer's dream come true. The DM can throw *anything* at the players -- and they will probably buy it! Who could ask for more than that?

The players can put in a little work, or a lot of it. They can be clever or dumb. They can fool around, joke, laugh, get bombed... and whether they win or lose, who cares? Most D&Ders like to see their characters advance, gain treasure and kill monsters, but as long as they enjoy themselves, it's enough. In regular wargames the parameters are closed. You can cover the rules and study the game until you know every trick and ploy. D&D is open ended and allows no complete knowledge of what will happen. That is true suspense. And that is *fun*.

What is wrong with D&D? Sometimes a Dungeonmaster would like to run a particular battle, but it might take from six to eight hours to plot it out well and he might not have the time. Some dungeons make it possible to have a 44th level Lord; in others it may be next to impossible to make

swashbuckler. Usually dungeonmastering is not explained too well -- Lord knows the rules are a bit spotty on just about everything. Part of the reason for this spottiness is the openess of D&D. Contrariwise, not having everything spelled out puzzles some players and dungeonmasters. They like games with more rules -- or should I say they are used to them?

In my own castle (the abandoned castle of Leomund the Blue, a 16th level Wizard out battling the forces of Chaos somewhere to the East) I match the levels against the groups going down. I think that even if the players make every correct decision there still should be a 5-10% chance of everyone in the party being killed anyway. With luck and correct decision those odds should go 20-40% killed, with just about every character taking 50% damage. It is a bad dungeon if everyone gets out alive and with little or no damage on top of it. If the players make incorrect decisions the odds should go as high as 75% of the parties totally destroyed; in like manner, if most of them do make it out alive with little damage, then the odds are excellent that no more than a couple will go up a level.

What is right with D&D? Well, I think I've outlined that. The Dungeon can and must be balanced against the players. If you get a group of diehard fanatics, boost the level of the monsters a little. If it is a fun group, then leave things alone. The idea is to make sure that the players do not know what to expect. Just because you see a certain type of monster you should not know everything about it. It is correct to lower monsters by as much as three hit-dice, but rarely to raise them by more than one. But I'm getting off the subject... so what else is new?

PHILIP M. COHEN

Philip is, according to his own modest admission, one of the better Dungeonmasters in upstate New York; Ithaca, to be exact. Readers of this zine will recognize him as the author of That Conan is a Real Teddy Bear *in issue #46.*

Some of the reasons for the popularity of D&D hardly need elaboration: the fun of playing Gandalf, or even some ordinary zhlub, in a fantasy world; playing god to those who enter your dungeon; the possibilities of play-acting; and so on. Here are four others I consider important:

1: D&D offers the dungeonmaster unlimited scope for creativity, which makes the game interesting for the players. But, unlike Midgard and other earlier fantasy games, an extensive structure is provided beforehand, so there is very little the dungeonmaster *must* create from scratch. It is possible to make a useable, if dull, dungeon by mindless die-rolling. Therefore even the rankest beginner can create a dungeon and start a campaign of sorts. Many do.

2: Good D&D play, though it requires familiarity with the rulebook information, is basically a matter of common sense, not memory. There are not, and by the nature of the game, cannot be standard openings as there are in chess. Every dungeon, every dungeonmaster is a new problem.

3: I recently read an article in *Chess Life and Review* which claimed that bridge tournaments are more popular than chess tourneys in part because they are cumulative. You never stop accumulating Master Points. This is even more true of D&D; the effects of an expedition are not limited to that expedition. The more you play the better your character gets; the clearer his personailty becomes; the more extensive your maps get; and the more you understand the dungeon and the dungeonmaster. It's addictive.

4: I like the funny dice.

The worst thing about D&D is the rules. They are ill-written; the use of "round" and "turn" has caused a lot of arguments at Cornell. The rules show their evolution too much. The costs of making magic (in *Men & Magic*) and the pre-*Ersatz Wizardry* balrogs go badly with a high-level *Greyhawk*-style game. The books are disorganized; monsters and treasure are scattered through three books and four supplements (this is inconvenient even if your dungeon differs vastly from Gygax' concepts). The rules don't always make sense (where do those free spell books come from when you go up a level?) What are hit points supposed to represent?

Another bad point is some people's rigid attitude towards the rules. There is a general unwillingness at Cornell to depart from Gygax' rules until they have been proved unworkable (preferably by killing someone who doesn't think he ought to have died). Contrariwise there seems to be a feeling of "We have the One True Religion" in a few groups like the *Dungeons & Beavers* group at the California Institute of Technology and the New York Conspiracy

The best thing about D&D for me is the friends and acquaintances it has brought me. I have read an immense amount of sf and a fair number of fanzines; but I still remain a fringefan. I have attended only one convention and have never had the urge to write for or publish a fanzine. But D&D seems to have done for me what fanzines have done for others: I talk of it with others; invent and write up ideas and send them to D&D zines; and have even tried (ineptly and unsuccessfully) to get out a Cornell University one-shot. I have discovered in the companionship of dungeoneers what others find in fandom. One good thing is that D&D seems to have avoided the factionalism of sf and Diplomacy fandoms so far. But give it time, give it time...

May I continue the analogy? The other thing I find good in D&D is the flexibility, whether it it the flexibility inherent in the standard rules or that of the players' infinite variations. D&D brings to gaming the imaginative possibilities that sf/fantasy brings to literature. Fans may be slans, but if so, dungeoneers are Noldor.

DIAWOL!

GREG COSTIKYAN

In the beginning there was The Pocket Arnmenian. His name was Greg Costikyan and he specialized in strange things such as Utter Chaos Diplomacy. Then New York discovered D&D and the Pocket Armenian created one of the stranger worlds. He also began to publish a large, sloppy D&D zine called Fire The Arquebussiers!

Never one to agree when he doesn't have to, Greg takes an unpopular position in his essay.

Bob Lipton (you know, the exhibit from the Scopes Trial) wants me to write something about two pages long discussing three earth-shaking questions regarding the amusing (if often dead-boring) game of *Dungeons & Dragons*.

First, this eminent soup-manufacturer wishes to know why D&D (as it is fondly called by people who wish to mangle their speech patterns by reducing five syllable to three) is a popular game.

This question makes a basic assumption : that D&D is popular. As any person who has had his mind fouled by the basics of an high school education knows, one must never question the assumptions of a question, but merely endeavor to answer that question. I believe this is a wrong-headed view of matters.

D&D is emphatically *not* a popular game. I know of at least five people

who have played D&D once and who found it boring. Compared to a really popular game D&D makes a very bad showing. How many D&D sets have been sold? Let us be generous and assume it is in the neighborhood of 30,000 units. How many units of Chess have been sold since the beginning of time? Of Go? The L game? What of such medium-popular games as *Monopoly*. *Go to the Head of the Class* and *Clue*?

By some stretch of the imagination one might possibly consider *Panzerblitz* something approaching a relatively well-known game... but D&D is nowheere even in its league.

Aha! You say (or maybe you don't. I for one don't care. If you refuse to get in the spirit of things and this article by exclaiming "*Aha!*" at irregular intervals you might as well let your bloody subscription lapse... but I stray from the subject). Sheer volume of sales cannot be the sole measure of popularity. D&D has not been around the thousands of years that Chess has, so how can you compare it to Chess? Or even to *Panzerblitz*?

Well, the-e exists an institution known as the SPI Feedback System. SPI asks the readers of its magazines to rate most of the current games on a scale from 1 to 9. The highest crrently-rated game is *Terrible Swift Sword* at 8.07. D&D rates a 6.5, putting it in the medium-good range.

Thus D&D is merely a mediocre game.

Onward. The second question this Bible-thumping legal genius of an editor would have us peruse is that of what is wrong with D&D?

I have a simple answer: Everything. D&D consists of three rulebooks and four supplements. The rules are badly written, inaccurate, sketchy, in parts incomprehensible. They emphasize complications which at best are of dubious import to the game and ignore things that could and should be covered more thoroughly.

Bluntly, the rules of *Dungeons & Dragons* are lousy. Any D&D world that is based strictly on the D&D rules will be boring as Hell, at least after the first playing.

The only way D&D can be made interesting is if the Dungeonmaster uses only those rules from the D&D book he thinks applies, invents new rules and monsters, treasure and character types, and new facets of the world.

Most good Dungeonmasters I know agree with me that to be a good DM, one must have organization, imagination and a total disregard for the rules.

And now at last, the third question posed by the man who rejuvenated the Democratic party: what is good about D&D?

The answer again, is simple: the concept. D&D has opened up a whole vista of games which have been recognized by no other company save GDW as yet: what SPI calls "role-playing" games. There is no need to confine D&D to fantasy character types. I know of one "D&D" world in which each character tries to gain power and experience in a Russian-Revolution-type situation (no magic and major rules changes, of course). I myself contemplated a game in which each player takes a person in an interstellar navy and attempts to raise him to Commodore status. And of course GDW has produced *En Garde*, a game in which each player takes a Three-Musketeers-type character and attempt- to raise his position in the world.

More important than the concept of role-playing, D&D is a fantasy game. The players and DM collaborate on writing a fantasy story that is as fascinating to those concerned as a good story in the genre would be.

Many psychologists hold that fantasy stories are a way of instructing children in cultural realities and of teaching them how to deal with those realities. Through fairy tales a child is able to act out his own fears and hopes.

Adults, too, need fantasy of a sort... as an escape valve for facts for the frustrations of everyday life. Dreams, books, movies and tv help do this. D&D can fulfill this function as well.

D&D -- and role-playing games in general-- is good because it strikes a chord in most human beings. It lets them play at "real life," it is mass hallucination, it is all the things a novel or movie can be, with the add-

ed aspect of interaction of those involved, the "audience" as well as the "author."

In closing, let me say I'm sorry if I have bored you. I'd also like to tha-k Mr. Bryan for letting me write this and I'd like him to know I support him in his fight for the free and unlimited coinage of silver at sixteen to one.

EDI E. BIRSAN

Edi Birsan has played wargames of various sorts since the early 1960s. He has published his own Diplomacy zine, The Arena, *has served as president of the International Diplomacy Association, and presently runs what is generally considered the best D&D campaign in New York.*

D&D & DIPLOMACY: When you boil away the mystic belief that Diplomacy is a wargame you are faced with the fact that Diplomacy is simply a social game with the emphasis on seven players interacting. It can thus be seen it would be only natural that a game which is a group game with many sides should sweep through Diplomacy fandom like wildfire.

Consider for example the simple fact that in Diplomacy there is only one winner while in D&D there is no real winner. This allows the players to rationalize their own behavior as victorious or satisfactory. So, while the players in Diplomacy are confronted with six-to-one odds against victory. In D&D there can be many victories at the same time, giving each player a greater sense of play.

D&D: WHAT'S GOOD ABOUT IT ANYWAY? There in the depths of a lost but not forgotten castle lies a challenge. A challenge which for the Dungeonmaster is one of creativity; for the players it is one of figuring out the solution and and survival techniques peculiar to the situation. Being open-ended it allows the DM and players to explore and totally mesh all the different gaming and conflict situation which they find enjoyable. For some it means getting into miniatures on occasion while others move in a progression of riddles and hidden puns via scrolls and pieces of lore.

For myself I got it into my head that I wanted to improve upon my own descriptive abilities and thus took to a DM role with a bit more determination than is probably suggested. To this I added a series of scrolls which is to be actually read for a page or two describing a problem or potential problem which the players could opt to go after or avoid.... or a problem they could create. Now with an increase in my interest in miniatures I'm adding that as an aspect of my wilderness, using the miniatures for battles.

D&D: WHAT'S BAD ABOUT IT? Probably the worst thing about D&D has to be the people involved in it. A poor DM can kill the game so fast that it makes the campaign a series of tortures rather than a game. Weak-willed and unimaginative DMs create a disaster about them which sucks in their players and nothing can help it. However, even if the DM is good the players can be a massive disappointment. Generally they can get into a rut where all they can think about is the hack and whack of battle rather than using a little brain power to solve a problem. All DMs like the interaction between players but often there are a few people who do most of the zapping which is also dull. We have a situation in many campaigns where no one stands up against the dominant figures to gather together a counter-force to tear them down. Without that it makes for a dull game.

Likewise, the players who are overburdened with cowardrice also ruin

many adventures. I remember working out a special sequence of events which started off with the interception of an Orc message about a gathering of the clans to make a joint Orc raid against the Elves and Dwarves. After a week of careful planning the adventure, all the human chickened out and the Dwarves and Elves unwilling to go against the rest of the party. Now in consequence the Orcs will make a raid where the Elves and Dwarves live and it is likely they will pay heavily for their cowardrice!

Argumentative players are also a pain in the ass for a DM. For example we have a rule that magic-users need 25 feet to conjure up a five-dice lightning bolt. In one expedition the party came upon a magic-user who tossed a few bolts from a balcony across the room. One of the players whipped out a pocket calculator and stated that the distance from the magic-user to himself was only 24.73 feet and therefore he couldn't be hit. Needless to say the bolt hit him and no further argument was accepted.

D&D MECHANICS VERSUS REALISM: There is an unfortunate trend in the D&D books coming out to create rules that are more and more complex for less and less real effect upon the game. The adjudication time, under these rules would take much longer and force even the best of DMs to be surrounded by loads of charts, flipping through a mirage of pages to find references to minor items. The DM should select his rules, modify them to a fast game that allows him time to create the mood of the expedition rather than report a dull print-out on the dice rolls. A good DM has to, in effect, put on a show where the players provide the decision points and the DM the descriptions for the parts. Without that showmanship D&D is a dull exercise in dice rolling and a boring way to spend a rainy or sunny Saturday afternoon.

JOHN CARROLL

John Carroll is a gangleader of the PSU D&D mob and one of the best press release writers in the hobby. He is also a rat for getting this in after I had formatted the issue and being too good to exclide.

Why do I like D&D, I heard Bob ask me in one of those phone calls that cost him and me fortunes. Well, that isn't one of the topics he assigned, but I can't remember what the three questions were, exactly, because they're buried among some 20 boxes and I've moved since then.

D&D is a complicated game with long, exasperatingly contradictory and redundant rules. The is second-hand knowledge, you see, because I've never read the rules except for the basics like weapon prices, how much I can shlep without breaking my back, et c. I haven't the foggiest idea how combat works. I just say "I draw Occidemus (my magic sword) and smite the blighter." Or "Fireball, seventh row of orcs," and "Kobolds are pussies."

This is the best part of D&D. You do *not* have to know the rules. In fact it's better if you don't. That's the DM's job. Penn State Wargame Club is blessed with two fine DMs, Rob North and John Sweeney, and others who are merely fine. I don't intend to be a DM. It is too much work. I have better things to do with my time, like paint my Ancients armies. Let someone with a passion for imposing Order on Chaos attack the rules. Or better yet, write your own.

The main failing of the rules is that they are based on Tolkien's four-part trilogy. *The Lord of the Rings* is poorly written, unbelievable, has dumb cardboard characters and I've read it six times. There are better works to base the rules on. Which some do.

CONTINUED ON PAGE EIGHTEEN

HOW TO DO THINGS WRONG

One of the greatest problems players run into in any D&D campaign is that they do not know precisely how to deal with situations where a careful choice is needed. Most often the choice is a matter of what words to use.

"The hex is clear. On the west hexside is a lake. On a rock by the edge you see what is apparently a naked girl, legs dangling in the ater, combing her green hair."

"Green hair?" says Cary Gister. "I approach."

"When you get to within 20 feet you see she is actually a mermaid. She is looking out to the middle of the lake."

"I say 'Hello'."

I roll a die for her reaction. "She turns around, sees you, and slips into the water, waiting."

"I say 'Don't be frightened. We're only looking for adventure.'"

No reaction roll is necessary. "She does a racing dive and heads into the depths of the lake."

Cary asks angrily "What the Hell did I do wrong?"

Cary's mistake was obvious to everyone, and they loudly told him so. His choice of the word 'adventure' was so bad as to be ludicrous. Any decent mer-maid would automatically assume that this human meant to rape her

Because of this, Cary decided to avoid the word 'adventure.' So, when the party found itself in a tavern looking for some fresh hirelings, Cary took over the negotiations.

"I say loudly 'Is there anyone here who wants some fun and money?'"

Three brawny longshoremen attempted to beat him up for impugning their masculinity. Cary saw them coming in time to escape.

That lake where Cary met the mermaid was the scene of another stupidity. A group had ridden out the day and come to the lake. Someone decided to catch some fish for the evening meal. A tug came on the line and there was a terrific struggle to land a triton. A quick Charm Monster was thrown. The triton admitted to having treasure, but since the charm probably wouldn't hold out of eyeshot, no attempt was made to get the treasure. Instead it was decided that the Charm should be released, since the Triton would probably realize that any magic-user that could throw a Charm Monster could do other, nastier things.

The Triton's reaction would have been very hostile if the fear factor had not been added in. He therefore said "Isn't there someone here who wants treasure?"

George Blume immediately said he did. The Triton offered to take George to it. George accepted, went into the lake with the Triton, and was never seen again.

Moral: Don't expect someone who should be feeling nasty to you to do something unreasonably nice.

The next mistake is the only major one I have ever seen Arnold Proujansky make in my world. He and Jerry Paulson were taking a trip up south and found a motel at the end of the road. They decided to sleep inside for a change. So they went into the office, paid, were given a key and told to go the "Cabin number 37, the first on the left."

Jerry and Arnold went outside and found the first cabin... number 29. They paused, then tried the key. After a second it turned. They walked in.

What they actually walked into was a man-eating creature which I got out of a story by Manly Wade Wellman. This creature disguised itself as a house to trap people into it, then closed up and ate them. If Jerry hadn't had a love potion, the mistake would have been fatal.

Moral: If everything isn't as it is supposed to be, assume that something is about to kill you.

THE FEAST

by John Brennick

An expedition in D&D should be like a well-written Sword & Sorcery story... if!

The sub rose, revealing in its warm light the rooftops of the great city of Jarleth, capital of the Empire of the Marnethalls. Atop the high walls which surround the city, the guards in their glinting armor marched backand forth. Merchants and peddlars began to call out their wares in the Great Market Square, while prospective buyers and others with business to do streamed about. Many still slumbered in their beds (or other's) while children in dirty rags chased each other. Carts from outside the City entered the town, carrying food.

In a tavern at the edge of the Square a beardeed mercenary who went by the name of Glauden wolfed down his morning meal. The chainmail he wore clinked like silver coins whenever he moved.

Today Glauden would work again, helping to guard a caravan to the city of Floben, a journey to the summer's sunrise. Glauden finished eating, laid down his last gold piece and got up. He carried his helmet into the Square. He pushed aside a peasant who led a mule, then turned down a wide street and into a barn. His warhorse was saddled and ready. He mounted and rode to the East Gate where the carvan was to form.

The caravan was almost ready to leave. Glauden was told where he was to ride by a small man with a scraggly beard and a cackling woman's voice. Glauden then waited for half and hour until the caravan moved out.

* * * * * * * * * * * * * * *

They had been travelling for five hours when the caravan stopped for some reason unknown to Glauden at a small castle by the edge of the woods. Glauden thought the structure most strange, for it flickered as if a wave passed over it. His reverie was broken as he realized that the wagons and pack animals had vanished and only he and the six other guards were left with two wrinkled old women. Or so he thought, for they vanished. He began to urge his horse to a gallop, to get away from this place, but checked himself as he heard some eerie but fascinating singing. Ever so slowly, Glauden wheeled his horse about then headed for the castle, which was no more a castle, but a cave in a stony hill. Yet Glauden hardly noticed this, so enraptured by the hypnotizing melody. Glauden dismounted and walked into the darkness of the gloomy cave, to see dimly three singing women.

To his horror, Glauden saw they were not women, for their lower bodies were those of birds, and their upper bodies sported huge bat-wings! Yet, try as he might, as the others entered the cave one by one, he could not rid himself of the desire to walk into that cave.

Suddenly the singing stopped. Glauden felt the spell fall apart. But as the men scrambled to escape their dooms the harpies pounced screaming onto their victims, numbing them with their touches. Glauden felt himself lose his senses as one of the harpies passed her hand over his face. The last thing he saw was the harpies devouring the other men. He then lost consciousness, knowing his time would soon come.

The two witches watched the meal with grim amusement. They then gathered the caravan's horses, armor, money and goods and started for the city where they could sell them at a good profit...

ABCSF- XXI

Before beginning this month's installment, several people have complained that I have not mentioned the works of Michael Moorcock. I have read slightly in excess of 300,000 words by Moorcock. I have now said all about Moorcock that is worth saying. If you don't have anything good...

MACK REYNOLDS:: Mack Reynolds is a hack. This does not mean he is incompetent. Indeed, a hack must maintain certain minimum standards or he is not published.

Indeed, Reynold's works bear some resemblance to those of C.M. Kornbluth. Kornbluth's major satiric leaping point (impelled by the bitterness of two mentally retarded children) was that intelligent people have few or no children, while stupid ones have many. Therefore humanity is breeding towards stupidity.

Reynolds major satiric hypothesis is that the world is tending to become more and more security-minded, with minimum income and so on and that adventurousness is therefore being bred out.

Unfortunately, while Kornbluth was a brilliant satirist, an excellent humorist (see "Ms. Found in a Chinese Fortune Cookie") and a fine writer Reynolds is a repetitive satirist, a heavy-handed humorist and a mediocre writer. In his novels, at any rate, which are totally ordinary. Some of his short stories (in *The Best of Mack Reynolds*) are excellent. At any rate, Reynolds is quick reading.

ERIC FRANK RUSSELL:: Strange. A few days ago Arnold Proujansky and I were discussing humorous writers and I didn't think of Russell. Perhaps this is because Russell's best known works are his novels *Sinister Barrier* and *Men, Martians & Machines* (actually a series of related short stories). But, beginning in the early 1950s he began to produce short, humorous stories, almost starting a school of it when Chirstopher Anvil (qv) started imitating Russell. Russell is not an incredibly excellent humorist; however, his British understatement is vastly preferable to Ron Goulart's (qv) slap on the back style. Unfortunately his novels almost invariably fail by a small margin. His best is probably *Wasp*. His short stories range all the way from incompetent to brilliant (see if you can find the incredible "I am Nothing".)

FRED SABERHAGEN: Saberhagen is a poor writer whose works I love to read. The reason is understandable. He has excellent ideas and poor plot control. His best-known works are his "Beserker" stories, about a mechanical civilization which wipes out biological life wheereever it finds life. This idea, excellent both in stfnal conception and literary symbolism is used effectively in none of his works. It is grafted on gratuitously to stories without any originality, patent thefts from which the serial numbers have been filed so no one will recognize them. Faugh!

Saberhagen's best work is the quite good *Dracula Tapes*, the real story of Count Vlad's encounter with that slayer of innocents, Van Helsing. The concept is spectacular, but the writing is merely competent. The resulting work is, as said, quite good, when a good writer would have made it brilliant.

Still, there is a slow, steady improvement in Saberhagen's writing style. By 1990 he may well be one of the field's steady craftsmen, akin to Gordon Dickson today.

JOHN SCHMITZ has been a dilletante in sf for a quarter of a century and has produced some excellent, though overrated books. His first notable

work was *The Witches of Karres*. I read this five years ago and remember nothing about it except it was one of the first novels to have women for protagonists. Woman's Libbers will please note.

Schmitz then disappeared for the decade of the 1950s then reappeared to produce a long series of stories about his "Hub" civilization in general and Telzey, a telepathic young girl in particular. (Query: Is "James Schmitz" a pseudonym for some lady writer? I don't think so. A field whose first definite work was *Frankenstein* by Mary Wollstonecraft has shown a great fondness for women writers, even if *Playboy* always refers to a certain multi-award winner as "U.K. LeGuin") In any case, Schmitz has produced a sizeable body of very good works. Try the collection *The Demon Breed* for starters.

BOB SHAW: Shaw is a writer of excellent reputation whose works I have just begun to add to my collection. Unfortunately I have not yet gotten around to reading his works. If anyone else wants to comment on him, I'll be happy to print his remarks.

ROBERT SILVERBERG: Everyone loves Silverbob's works but me.

And next issue we start off with Clifford Simak. Not enough space to discuss him here.

::

TOKA THE TOWN

4: Page sixteen was cut on some stencils I picked up a few days ago. They look as if they cut well. This issue will be finished on the usual stencils.

5: Word has filtered through (thanks to Rick Kovalcik who sent me his latest *Tetracuspid* with comments on the subject and to John Beshara who mentioned it on the phone) that Doug Beyerlein intends to begin charging $1 for each Boardman Number he hands out. The total effect of this will be that very few Boardman Numbers will be issued. Because very few Numbers will be issued, *Everything* will lose its value as a statistical zine. As a result of that a lot of people will cut trade. As a result of that Beyerlein will probably abandon the Numbers to someone who does not insist on making a profit out of a Hobby. Numbers will then be back-issued. So perhaps one year will be lost. Why doesn't Beyerlein save time and simply transfer the Custodianship to someone else? Not that all this mellimellou bothers me. I don't trade with Doug as things stand now. This is because I am an unreasonable person.

6: Mark Keller, an acquaintance from D&D fandom and sf fandom has begun his own zine. It is not a Diplomacy zine. The first issue, replete with amusing cartoons by the editor, contains an article on those alligators in the New York sewers (seems it's more than a croc'), an article on sf westerns by Don D'Ammassa, some discussions on John Norman, an article on beach party-monster movies, and sundry other thing (yes, thing.) The first issue is 20 pages and excellent reading. Mark can, judging by contributions to APALOOSA (it was 'Loosa, wasn't it Mark?) and THE WILD HUNT, be counted to keep to his bimonthly schedule.

Mark has no subscription policy, but I'm sure he'll send you a copy for a stamped, self-addressed envelope. Write him at 101 South Angell Street, Providence, RI, 02906 USA. Contributions of a fannish nature will be appreicated, I am sure.

I know a DM who bases his universe entirely on *Lord of the Ring*. It's too bad that animosity between our players prevents me from commenting objectively.

Rob North has gone to the Eddas, Poul Anderson's *Hrolf Kraki's Saga*, *The Broken Sword*, etc, and has created a marvellous universe. To survive you don't need to know the rules. You do have to know how much you can trust yon burly swordsman who has just sworn by Odin to protect you and your treasure. Should you cut down that hanged man and give him a decent burial? Who is that old man with one eye, a floppy hat and ravens circling his head? And, how would you like this really neat magic sword, goes by the name of Tyrfing?

Then there was the time in one of the merely fine universes, Steve's, when someone got rolled by Fafhrd and the Grey Mouser.

"Hold it!" I hear someone shout out there. "You don't want to read the rules because you're lazy." Well, yes, I am. But there is also the philosophic question: Do you in this Universe, know all the rules that govern your life? Well, why should you in D&D? Why should Sysiphus know that with Occidemus he has a 40% chance of hitting undead? The DM should simply tell him "Your sword *likes* to hit ghouls."

If I ever get a magic-user high enough to puzzle out the rules of the universe, say 6th level, I might read the rules fully, but not until then. Strange, but all my dumb characters survive anyway. Perhaps that says something.

Oh, yes. I just remembered the third question. How can D&D be improved? Ask a Dungeonmaster. He does all the work. Say, did I ever tell you about the time I was tied to the Tolted altar where the priest was about to cut out my heart while Eric Unguentine, soon to become my half-soul brother, was frantically searching the bowels of the pyramid and...

So, there are five separate essays on D&D. Each has made the same points in slightly differing manners: the bad construction of the rulebooks, the necessity for each dungeonmaster to create a world that is uniquely his own.

Each has made unique points. Len, the ability of the players to make of the game what they want; Phillip the joy of finding simpipatico people; Greg the infinite possibilities of this new type of game; Edi, the self-expansionary possibilities of D&D; and John the basic ease of play that the game offers.

All in all, a successful symposium, isn't it? Thanks to the five people who took the time to contribute.

::

TOKA THE TOWN

2: Blame John Carroll for the complete foul-up of the formatting of this issue. Even so, an excellent pair of contributions by him, n'est-ce-pas?

3: Someone thinks I am cheating on his subscription. Joel Klein notes that his sub total was unchanged from issue 56 from 55, and thinks I have not been charging him for the issues. Never fear! I usually type up the mailing labels for two issues simultaneously and subtract the suitable amount for two issues. This saves me about 30 minutes each issue.

DUNGEONS AND DRAGNS AND WHY IT CAN ONLY BE PLAYED WITH MINIATURES

Dungeons & Dragons can be played with miniatures, paper and pencil, in your head, sitting on a cabbage, or whatever. I hear there are some who play by mail, but for the life of me, I can't figure how. And of course someone, somewhere, is using $50 a minute computer time to...

I have played D&D in the first three manners, and one may guess my preference by the title of this article.

I have been a wargamer since 1964, cutting my teeth on Gettysburg and have been hooked ever since. Then, three years ago, I discovered miniatures. My only interest is in Ancient and Medieval wargaming, using W.R.G. Ancient Fifth Edition Rules and Dave Millward's *God's Acre*. Napoleanics just don't appeal to me and I sometimes think that 75% of all tank miniatures players are closet Nazis. And some aren't even hiding in the closet.

In the course of building up an army, one soon learns that not all troops can be Campanion Cavalry or Persian cataphracti, i.e., troops you are willing to spend good money on. You just don't want to spend 35¢ for a crummy LI javelinman, and you need 18 of them. But hold! If one takes the Airfix Robin Hood set, cuts the bow off the standing archer, glues a shield punched out of new shirt collar plastic, pushes a straight pin through the right hand, paints the tunic black -- Voila! An Agrianian Javelin Light Infantryman. What could be easier?

Three boxes complete a unit. Need 50 Medium Infantry "E" archers? Robin Hood set again. Peltasts? Robin Hood. So I have eight boxes of Robin Hoods, with eight Friar Tucks and eight Maid Marians. I never throw anything away.

Did you (those of you who are miniature wargamers) ever buy one figure just to see what it looked like, didn't particularly like it, but painted it anyway?

In the two sets of rules I use, some figures are individually based. I also have gladiators and a Dragon which God only knows why I bought.

So here I have a bunch of single figures, some useful, some useless. And then Bruce (no, a different one) brings the first copy of D&D anyone has ever seen to a Sunday Penn State Wargame Club session. He had several monsters, including British anteaters and Polar Bears and I had the playing characters. Suddenly a use for Friar Tuck. Cleric! That appalling Sassanid Levy Spearman by Archive became the wizard Appledore. A Minifig "A" Greek became Sisyphus of Prophylaxos (yes, Bruce, I stole it from you). And you can bet any Viking figures were well received.

Perhaps I am prejudiced in favor of playing D&D with miniatures because we started that way. But I don't think so. Aside from the spectacle, it graphically shows just how many can attack that dragon, who can fire, etc. Somehow you care more for a character when you've painted him yourself. The figures that have represented Sisyphus in the various stages of his career include the Minifigs Greek, a McEwan foot knight, Minifig cataphract, Minifigs War of the Roses foot knight and mounted knight. Currently he's a Hinchliffe Pathan and Achmaenid Persian cataphract. Each figure was carefully chosen to represent this splendid fighter/magic-user according to his views on armor at any given moment.

And let's not forget elephants! Any self-respecting Ancients player has elephants, and you can guess which miscellaneous magic item I was lucky enough to get. In one battle (the Third Toltec Expedition, if you must know) a Mirror of Opposition was used on my elephant by an Evil High Priest. There

were beserkers, patriarchs, evil acoylytes, altars, two elephants, Adventurers (that's the players), miscellaneous bad guys, all in a forty foot heaxagonal room. Only miniatures could do justice to the spectacle of that battle!

Let's face it. When you have just emerged from fighting two weretigers with your back in a corner, it's nice to see your figure, which you painted, shaking his sword in defiance at the corpses of the weretigers who are laying on their backs with their feet in the air.

And now for a brief review of the figures available. Not that anyone asked for it. And in no particular order.

Heritage (Heritage Models, Inc.: 2916 Blystone Lane, Dallas, Tex. 75220; catalog 50¢) Earth of Old range. I have mixed emotions about this line. First, it is not 25 mm, as all others are, but closer to 30mm. or even 35mm. Thus, the hobbits are not hobbits. They do make excellent Hokas, though. The two-headed trolls, I swear, look just like Richard Nixon. The dwarves look like Disney dwarves and are taller than many 25mm. figures. The orcs are not orcs at all, but excellent werewolves. The goblins riding wolves would give anyone nightmares, especially if you paint the skin gree and the eyes red, as I did. The dragon is a massive, scaly worm with itty-bitty wings. The wraiths are a cowled form, gloves holding weapons, no body or arms. Very clever animation. The spear is terrible, though. Substitute wire. Come to think of it, all the Heritage weapons are rotten. This range is being phased out in favor of the Fantasy Fantastics range, none of which I've seen.

Der Kriegspielers Fantastiques (Custom Cast, Inc.: 57 S. Main St.,Dayton Ohio: Catalog $2) A matter of taste here, these are superbly detailed. Also superbly expensive. I don't know how they can charge $2.25 for two 25mm. cavalrymen and get people to buy them, but they do. The cheap cavalry is $1.98 for two, still way out of line. The orcs are $1.98 for four, two each of spears and bows. Many sets are cheaper, but they still sell two different types per set. And finally, I don't like the type of detail. It's... it's ... Napoleanic!

Grenadier (118 Lynbroke Rd., Springfield,Pa. 19064: SSAE for catalog) Superb dragon! Their fantasy range is specifically designed for D&D. Just check the wererats and specialists (magic-users, bards, clerics, thief, etc) The detail is functional and has a purpose, as opposed to the *Fantastiques* detail which is forced in the same way detail in Thor comix is forced. Very interesting sets: chariot of the necromancer, room of the sorceror, torture chamber, orc with dart-throwing engine. These are among the cheapest figures around. Hobbits start at 20¢. Their Ancients are 30¢ foot and 60¢ mounted. They also have a western range for TSR's *Boot Hill.* One figure is known as "Mexican armed to the teeth." Highly recommended, and tell them I said so. That might speed up my order.

MacEwan (380 D St., Salt Lake City. Utah: 50¢ for catalog, $2 for catalogue & sample) Six different dragons, all excellent. Great troll. Mediocre everything else.

Garrison (from C.H. Johnson, 907 Washington Ave., Belmar Wall Township, NJ 07719: catalog 50¢ 10% discount of Minifigs Fantastiques and Hinchliffe. Till the end of November, 20% off Minifigs & Hinchliffe!) I've not seen any of Garrison's Fantasies, but if they are anything life the Ancient, Medieval and Hastings range, they should be excellent. One problem: Figures are sold by the box for $3.50. That's for 10 identical infantry and five cavalry. So if you want ten Wizards of the White Hand... Johnson might sell these individually. I bought some individual Greek officers and standard-bearers from him, so maybe. It can't hurt to ask, though he says Garrisons are difficult to obtain.

Minifigs (Box P, Pine Plains, NY 12567: $2 for catalog) Minifigs is the largest and most active manufacturer in the business. Many ranges to choose from. Two Ancients ranges, four Medieval, Aztecs & Conquistador, Vikings, English Civil War and of course S&S and Mythical Earth. Sword & Sorcery was

designed as a "Conan" range, but copyright problems won't let them call it that. That shouldn't stop you, though. See *Strategic Review* ## 2 or 3 for the correlation between the figures and what they represent in the Conan Canon. Thus S&SX1 *is* Conan. S&SX2 *is* Red Sonja. Drool. A wide variety of magic-users is included. Mythical Earth range is Middle Earth, of course. The Hobbits and dwarves aren't that good. For hobbits, try 15mm. Ancients or English Civil War, particularly peasants with pitchforks, et c. I have a unit of 12 Assyrian Heavy Infantry hobbit slingers. Elves are all right, but nothing fantastic.

Hynchliffe (from C.H. Johnson): These are British. They used to have E.R. Burroughs Barsoomian figures, but they may be phasing them out. Their Crusader line is reminiscent of the Normans. In the same range are fine Saracens and mounted knights. Fine ancients. Expensive if you're buying them by the groups, but Johnson sells individual figures.

Finally, dig in your old toy chests for those dinosaurs, Sugar Crisp mastodons, plastic knights, Aurora Viking longboats, etc. Go out to K-Mart, check the toy department, see if they still have those 54mm. Vikings, ideal for giants, which sell for 49¢ maximum and might get dumped for 10¢.

The D&D combat system isn't the best. We all know that. Try the following sets of individual figure rules, each of which has some very good ideas: *Gladiators* is available from C.H. Johnson, as is *Sword & Spear*. The Colonial Skirmish rules are available from Lou Zocchi, 7604C Newton Dr., Biloxi, Miss.

::

1975 IN *MANUVERING* *Spring 1905*

ENGLAND Richard Kovalcik Jr.)
F Edi S RUSSIAN F Nrg-NAt
F Nth S F Edi (retreats-Yor, Hel, Ska, annihilated)
A Yor-Lon

FRANCE (Joel Klein)
A Lvp-Edi
F NAt-Nrg
F Iri-Wal
F Eng S GERMAN F Den-Nth
A Bur-Bel
A Ruh S GERMAN A Kie
A Par-Pic

GERMANY (David Hansen)
F Den-Nth
A Hol H
A Kie S A Mun-Ber
A Mun-Ber

Thanks to Paul Clement for his standby moves. Fall 1905 moves are due by noon, Friday 12 November 1976.

ITALY (Zane Parks)
F Nap-Apu
A Pie S A Ven
F Tun-Tyr
A Ven H

RUSSIA (Dennis Klein)
A Boh-Mun
A Sil S A Boh-Mun
A Ber S A Boh-Mun (retreats-Pru, annihilated)
A Vie-Boh
F Bal-Den
F Swe S F Bal-Den
F Nrg-NAt
F StP(nc)-Nwy

TURKEY Paul Novak)
A Tyr S RUSSIAN A Boh-Mun
A Tri-Ven
A Alb H
A Ser-Gre
F Ion-Adr
F Gre-Ion
F Aeg & F Eas S F Gre-Ion

::

1972 EJ *MOVEMENT IN THE EASTERN LANDS* *Winter 1908-Spring 1909*

AUSTRIA (Dennis Klein)
A Tri-Vie
A Vie-Gal
A Bud S A Vie-Gal
A Rum-Bul
F Aeg S A Rum-Bul
F Ion-Eas

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE

ENGLAND (Henry Kelley)
A Pie S GERMAN A Ven
F Tyr S F Tun-Ion
F Tun-Ion
F NAf-Tun
F Tus, A Rom, F Wes & F Mid all H

RUSSIA (John Hulland)
Builds A Sev
A Sev S A Gal-Ukr
A Gal-Ukr
A Bul S F Bla-Bul (retreats-Con, Ser Gre, annihilated)
F Bla-Rum

GERMANY (Ronald M. Kelly)
A Sil-Gal
A Ruh-Kie
F Kie-Bal
A StP-Mos
A Ber-Pru
A War S A Ukr
A Ukr S A Sil-Gal
A Ven, A Mun & F Swe all H

Fall 1909 moves are due by noon, Friday 12 November 1976.

::

1975 AY *ALL BUSY ON THE EASTERN FRONT* *Fall 1909*

FRANCE (Tom Kissner)
F Nrg-Nwy
F Eng-Pic (retreats- Iri, annihilated)
A Bre S A Par
A Par S ITALIAN A Mar-Bur

GERMANY (John Rubins)
A Pic-Bre
A Gas-Par
F Bal-Ber
A Ruh S A Kie-Mun
A Bur S A Gas-Par
A Kie-Mun
F Bel-Eng
F Wal S F Bel-Eng
A Yor-Lon
A Lvp-Edi
A Nwy-Stp (retreats- Fin, Swe, ann.)

ITALY (John Brennick)
F Spa(nc)-Gas
A Mar-Bur
A Pie-Mar
F Wes-Mid
F Tyr & F Edi Hold
A Tyr-Mun
A Boh S A Tyr-Mun
A Tri-Tyr

TURKEY (David Hertz)
A Pru S A Ber
A Sil S ITALIAN A Tyr-Mun
A Ber S ITALIAN A Tyr-Mun
A Gal & A Lvn Hold
A StP S FRENCH F Nrg-Nwy
F Ion-Gre
F Aeg-Ion
F Eas-Ion

SUPPLY CENTERS

COUNTRY	GAINS	LOSES	RETAINS	OWNS	BUILDS/ REMOVES
FRANCE	Nwy	Spa	Bre, Par, Por	4	0
GERMANY		StP Ber Mun Nwy	Bel, Den, Hol, Kie, Lvp, Lon, Swe	7	-4
ITALY	Spa, Mun		Edi, Bud, Mar, Nap, Rom Ser, Tri, Tun, Ven, Vie	12	+3
TURKEY	Ber StP		Mos, Ank, Bul, Con, Gre Rum, Sev, Smy, War	11	+2

I think if I called for combined Winter-Spring they would only be separated, so please have Winter 1909 moves in by noon, Friday 12 November 1976.

::

1975 J *FRANCE & RUSSIA AT WAR* *Spring 1908*

AUSTRIA (John Hulland)
A Tyr-Mun
A Sil-War
A Gal S A Sil-War
A Bud-Rum
A Rum-Ukr
F Aeg S A Ser-Bul

ITALY Richard Kovalcik, Jr.)
F Tyr-Wes
F Tun & F Lyo S Tyr-Wes
A Pie S A Mar
A Mar H (annihilayed)

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE

FRANCE (Zane Parks)
F Bre-Mid
A Par-Pic
A Spa-Mar
A Gas & A Bur S A Spa-Mar
F Mid-Spa(sc)
A Bel-Ruh
F Hol S F Nth
F Nth H
F Wes-Lyo(retreats-NAf, ann.)

TURKEY Ed Hollshwandner
A Smy-Arm
F Con-Bla
F Ank S F Con-Bla

RUSSIA (John Gross)
F Nwy-Nth
F Den S F Nwy-Nth
F StP(nc)-Nwy
F Bla-Rum
A Sev S F Bla-Rum
A Mos S A War
A War S AUSTRIAN A Gal-Sil
A Kie-Mun
A Ber S A Kie-Mun

Fall 1908 moves are due here by noon, Friday, 12 November 1976.

::

1975 IJ RUSSIA WINS WITH 22 CENTERS *Fall 1910*

AUSTRIA (Jeffrey Topper)
A Mar S FRENCH A Bur

ENGLAND (Mark Edwards)
F Cly-Edi
F Lvp-Wal
F Edi-Yor

FRANCE (Ronald M. Kelly)
F Mid-Bre
F NAt-Mid
A Bur S F Bel
F Bel H(dislodged)

TURKEY (Eric Verheiden)
A Arm-Smy
A Con S A Bul
A Bul & A Ser S A Gre (Ser disl.)
A Gre S A Ser (dislodged)
F Bla S A Bul

ITALY (John Hendry)
F Tyr-Tun
F Ion-Nap

RUSSIA (Paul Novak)
F Nrg-Edi
F Nth S F Nrg-Edi
F Eng-Lon
F Ska H
A Mun-Bur
A Ruh-Bel
A Hol S A Ruh-Bel
A Rom H
A Mos S A Sev
A Rum-Bul
A Ukr-Rum
A Sev S A Ukr-Rum
A Alb-Gre
F Aeg S A Alb-Gre
A Tri-Ser
A Bud S A Tri-Ser

SUPPLY CENTERS

COUNTRY	GAINS	LOSES	RETAINS	OWNS	BUILDS/ REMOVES
AUSTRIA			Mar, Spa	2	0*
ENGLAND		Edi, Lon	Lvp	1	-2
FRANCE		Bel	Bre, Par, Por	3	-1
ITALY		Rom	Nap, Tun	2	-1
RUSSIA	Edi Lon Bel Rom Gre Ser		Hol,Tri,Ven,Kie,Ber,Mun,Vie,Nwy Mos,Rum,StP,Sev,Swe,War,Bud,Den	22	+4**
TUKREY		Gre,Ser	Ank,Bul,Con,Smy	4	-2

Congratulations to Paul Novak! Final wrapup with comments and a supply center chart will appear in the next issue. That will be the last issue for John Hendry and Jeff topper unless they resubscribe.

Jeff Topper has moved to Japan and will be out of touch for a year and a half or so. I hope he'll resub on his reappearence.

MG XI *REDUCED TO ONE SEASON BY POPULAR DEMAND* *WINTER 1902*

AUSTRIA (Zane Parks)
Has A Gal, A Bud, F Ion, A Rum, A Ser & F Gre

FRANCE (Eric von der Luft)
Has A Par, A Spa, A Bur, F Mar & F Por

ITALY (James Starr)
Build F Nap
Has F Nap, A Tun, F Tyr & A Tyr

RUSSIA (John Hulland)
Remove F Bot
Has A Sev, A War, & A Ukr

ENGLAND (Laurence Lurio)
F Swe annihilated; Builds F Lon
Has F Lon, F StP, A Nwy, F Bar, F Ska

GERMANY (Bert van den Boogaard)
Builds A Ber, F Kie
Has A Ber, F Kie, A Bel, A Mun, A Den, F Swe & F Nth

TURKEY (John Rubins)
Has A Bul, F Aeg, F Bla & A Arm

Spring 1903 moves by 12 Nov. 1976 at noon, if you please.

:::

1975 EP *SEE PREVIOUS HEADLINE* *Winter 1905*

ENGLAND (Scott Uhrick) NMR!
Has F Tun, F Wes, F NAf, F Mid, F NAt, F Eng, A Lon & A War

GERMANY (Richard J. Meyer)
Has F F Nth, A Gas, A Por, A Pic, A Bur, A Mos, A SilA Tyr & A Boh

TURKEY (Howard Markowitz)
Build F Smy
Has F Smy, A Sev, F Bla & A Apu

FRANCE (John Rubins)
A Bur r-Ruh; Removes A Par
Has A Ruh, A Mar

ITALY (Doug Hollingsworth)
Has A Ukr, A Ser, F Tus, F Tyr, F Ion, F Aeg & A Vie

RUSSIA (Eric Verheiden)
Has A Gal & A Tri

Spring 1906 by 12 November, please.

Will Eric Goldberg, 1225 Park Ave., NYC NY 10028 please standby for England?

:::

MG XII GAMESTART NOW

AUSTRIA: John Weswig 2115 N W Elder St., Corvallis, Ore. 97330
ENGLAND: Douglas Hollingsworth 37 Sanford St., Bangor, Me.04401
FRANCE: David Hertz, Swathmore College, Swathmore, Pa. 19081
GERMANY: David Hansen 6312 92 Ave., Edmonton, Alta. CANADA T6B OS5
ITALY: John Rubins 161 Berhardt Drive, Snyder, NY 14226
RUSSIA Mark Edwards 170 W. 73rd St., Apt. 12 C NYC, NY 10023
TURKEY Dennis Klein Box 912, Knox College, Galesburg, Ill. 61401.

The gamesmaster is Robert Sacks, ~~4861 Broadway~~ 5-V, NYC, NY 10023. Spring 1901 moves are due by noon, THURSDAY 2 December 1976. Bon chance a tout. Sacks' number is 212- 942-3572

THE MIXUMAXU GAZETTE
~~c/o Robert Bryan~~
556 Green Place
Woodmere, NY 11598 USA
(516) 374-4723



SEND TO: Tony Watson trade
201 Minnesota Street
Las Vegas, Nev.89107

NEW GAME STARTS MVING (SEE ABOVE)

__ This is your last issue unless you resubscribe.
_X_ Eric Goldberg is needed as a standby in 1975 EP. See page 24, please.

~~FIRST CLASS MAIL~~ PRINTED MATTER RATES